



United States Congress

NEWS RELEASE

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CRAIG, SIMPSON SECURE POTATO CYST NEMATODE FUNDING FOR IDAHO

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Larry Craig, R-Idaho, and U.S. Rep. Mike Simpson, R-Idaho, announced today that both the House and Senate versions of the Agriculture Appropriations bill include funds to eradicate potato cyst nematode (PCN) in Idaho.

PCN was discovered in eastern Idaho in 2006 – the first discovery of the pest in the United States. PCN can result in up to 80 percent loss of a potato crop and has the potential to devastate the Idaho and U.S. potato industry. Craig and Simpson said, **“Because PCN currently is located in such a small area, we need to grasp this unique opportunity to eradicate the pest early. The United States can’t afford to ignore a threat of this magnitude to its \$2.9 billion potato industry.”**

Today, the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies approved \$12.8 million for the program in its fiscal year 2008 appropriations bill. Last week, the House also approved funding. Craig and Simpson are both members of their respective Appropriations Committees.

To date, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has provided \$10.78 million to begin this aggressive PCN eradication program. Approximately \$12 million is needed to continue the program, which is being administered by the Idaho State Department of Agriculture.